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THE HANDMAID'S TALE

It may be a dark future, but individual humanity still shines in this series

metroLIFE

NOT-SO-HAPPY HOUR

A new pricing model introduced by the B.C. government in 2015 has resulted in big price increases

metroNEWS

A beer at a micro-brewery tasting room in Vancouver.
JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO FILE

Liberals decrying non-existent gas 'ban', city says

CAMPAIGN

Election pledge 'mischaracterizes' Vancouver's policy

David P. Ball
Metro | Vancouver

Even the noblest of election campaigns can stretch the limits of the "truth" — and B.C.'s current race has even seen a "Truth Truck" follow NDP Leader John Horgan around pointing out his own massive political donations as he's railed against them.

A new B.C. Liberal campaign pledge "to repeal the City of Vancouver's ban on the use of natural gas for home heating and cooking" — issued by Vancouver-Quilchena candidate Andrew Wilkinson on Saturday — may stretch truth's limits to their utmost ahead of the May 9 vote.

That's because there is actually no "ban" on natural gas in Vancouver — not for another 33 years, at least.

"The City wishes to clarify that it is not banning the use of natural gas in Vancouver," the city noted in a release. "... Developers can choose to build new buildings with natural gas, provided they can meet the energy efficiency and emissions targets."

And despite the former Cabinet minister alleging such a ban begins Monday, costing the average family "$1,500" more a year, in fact what does start is a new Green Building Rezoning Policy. It requires new buildings — and only ones needing rezoning — to curb their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by between 50 and 70 per cent.

"This mischaracterizes Vancouver's policy," retorted the city's climate policy manager Matt Horne on Twitter. "The policy sets energy efficiency and GHG targets for new (buildings). Developers decide how to meet them."

However, the city policy, adopted unanimously by Council last November, does pledge to "phase out" fossil fuels gradually by the year 2050.

Natural gas provider Fortis B.C. (a $200,000 donor to the B.C. Liberals since 2005, according to Elections B.C. and party records) fired back with its own statement that, "The City of Vancouver's approach ... will effectively eliminate the use of natural gas for space and water heating in rezoned buildings."

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

New York's tourism industry plans to woo Canadians to help combat 'the Trump slump' **World**

BC Votes 2017

On the campaign trail: with David Wong

This week Metro joins three Vancouver candidates on their rounds. Today, we feature the BC Greens' David Wong. Tomorrow we'll profile Spencer Chandra Herbert, BC NDP candidate for Vancouver-West End. And on Wednesday, we'll tag along with Sam Sullivan, BC Liberal candidate for Vancouver-False Creek.

David Wong, BC Green candidate for Vancouver-Hastings, talks to Stanley, Gigi, and Austin April 26, as he campaigns in the neighbourhood. JEN ST. DENIS/METRO

"I'm gaining so much respect for all candidates. That's one thing I've really, really learned.
David Wong

David Wong, a newbie candidate for the BC Green Party, admits to feeling a little tired when he shows up to meet Metro at the Continental Café on Commercial Drive.

Along with the all-candidate debates, media interviews and on-the-street campaigning, Wong said he's been spending a lot of time studying up.

"Five weeks ago I was just David Wong, architect," he says. "Now I'm supposed to be an expert in transportation, health care, poverty reduction and on and on."

Wong worked in Vancouver's planning department in the 1980s, and the BC Greens have named him their spokeman on housing issues.

The Greens have unveiled a housing platform that goes after speculation more than the other two parties, suggesting tax changes to target high-priced properties, flipping and foreign buyers.

At the corner of Commercial and 2nd Avenue, Wong encounters a man named Patrick who gives Wong an earful about the BC Green platform commitment to tax capital gains on real estate profits of over $750,000.

"That's totally wrong," Patrick says, "I spent a lot of money on that house and that's my retirement nest egg."

Wong explains the proposed policy exempts those who have owned their home for more than five years and is designed to discourage speculation in Vancouver's runaway real estate market, not penalize homeowners.

"I'm not going to vote Liberal," Patrick assures Wong. "Give me one of your brochures — give me two."

Wong says he chose to run for the Greens because they allow him to say what he thinks and don't demand he parrot party talking points. He's been outspoken about the NDP's proposed $400 a year renter's grant, which Wong says will push rents up even further. He's not shy about criticizing the increasing trend of mixing market condos with a small percentage of social housing, which he says is not a particularly efficient way to create more low-income housing.

After talking to several more people, Wong turns off Commercial Drive, heading to McSpadden Park. On the way, he meets Brahim Jounh, who says he's most concerned about the cost of housing: His small one-bedroom apartment has risen from $900 to $1,300 a month in four years. "In comparison to wages, it's very high."

Wong uses the same line again and again: "I just want to make some noise. I'm a trouble-maker — I've got an East Van attitude."

Wong grew up in the neighbourhood he now hopes to represent (he went to high school at Templeton Secondary), although he now lives in Killarney.

It's going to be an uphill battle for Wong: Vancouver-Hastings, currently represented by the NDP's Shane Simpson, is considered a safe NDP riding.

"My dad worked in sawmills in Port Alberni, my mom had three or four jobs," Wong explains. He started "hanging out with the wrong people" as a teen but says he was lucky enough to be mentored by Vancouver architect Joe Wai.

At the park, Wong makes a beeline for three friends eating pizza on the grass. Gigi, 25, Stanley, 27 and Austin, 25, all tell Wong they intend to vote. Austin says he'd like to see more money go into health care.

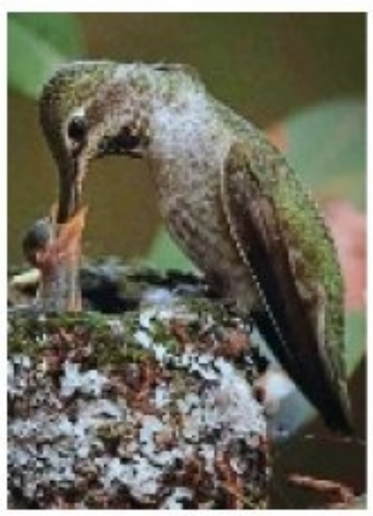
"One of my jobs is moving medical supplies to the different hospitals in the Lower Mainland," he says. "I get to see all the conditions — it's not the best."

As he walks across the park, Wong talks about another campaigning challenge: The Greens don't accept union or corporate donations, so he's had to hold fundraisers to cover the cost of his own campaign.

The BC Liberals' and NDP's acceptance of millions in donations under B.C.'s very lax rules have become a hot topic this election, but Wong admits it's not easy to have to rely on grassroots fundraising.

Wong says the hard slog of running for office has given him new respect for politicians.

"It's easy to yell at people," he says. "I'm gaining so much respect for all candidates. That's one thing I've really, really learned."



Anna's Hummingbird AP

NOMINATIONS

A sneak beak at the short list for official city bird

Wanyee Li
Metro | Vancouver

The annual election for Vancouver's official bird is on again but this time the stakes are high — this round will determine the city's 'forever' bird.

The winning bird will represent Vancouver at the 27th international Ornithological Congress in August 2018 and at the city's first-ever International Bird Festival.

The candidates are: Anna's hummingbird, northern flicker, spotted towhee, and varied thrush.

City staff surveyed Vancouverites on what words they thought best described the city and matched them up with the characteristics of four birds, according.

Anna's hummingbird is "classy, urbane, and stylish with a heart of a tiger," says the city website.

Meanwhile, the spotted towhee has an air of "unassuming sophistication" and the northern flicker is often heard working hard throughout the city, pecking at up to 22 beats per second.

Last but not least, the varied thrush is a talented musician and able to sing two notes in harmony at the same time.

All four birds are native to Vancouver and not commonly found outside the Pacific Northwest.

Voters are encouraged to get to know the candidates by messaging them on the city's Facebook page.

In addition to representing Vancouver on the world stage, the city's official bird will be 'spokesbird' for the Vancouver Bird Strategy. The strategy aims to support migratory birds as they pass through the city, raise awareness about the avian community, and provide people with greater access to nature.

Deadline for voting is May 14. Past city birds include the northwestern crow (appointed in 2014), black-capped chickadee (elected in 2015) and peregrine falcon (elected in 2016).

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Katherine Langford in a scene from 13 Reasons Why, a series about a teenager who kills herself. BETH DUBBER/NETFLIX VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

13 Reasons to talk about Netflix show

SUICIDE AWARENESS

Boards, experts urge parents to be aware of dangers of show

Wanyee Li
Metro | Vancouver

The Vancouver School board and mental-health experts are warning parents about the dangers surrounding the Netflix series, 13 Reason Why.

The dramatization of suicide in the series, aimed at youth, could trigger people who have thought about killing themselves before or those who suffer from depression, according to mental-health resources. The Vancouver School Board sent a letter to parents Friday, encouraging them to talk with their children to help them understand what the show is depicting.

It's good advice because youth are especially at risk, says Jonny Morris, senior director of policy and planning at the Canadian Mental Health Association's B.C. office.

"Research has shown there are sometimes risks when suicide is glamourized or overly dramatized," he said. "It's one thing to have suicide to be part of a storyline. It's another to have it dramatically enacted with the 'how' spelled out in detail."

The show also centres on the idea of communicating after death and blaming others for a character's decision to kill herself. That's problematic for two reasons, said Morris.

"Suicide is permanent when it happens," he emphasized. "It's always a tragic thing."

The idea that someone's suicide is the fault of those around them can be very harmful, said Morris.

"Grief through suicide is hard enough, so to have a message out there that it's their fault is incredibly difficult."

Despite the questionable nature of the show, young people are going to watch it and it's futile to try and stop them, he said.

The best things parents can do is have informed conversations about the real consequences of suicide and offer support if their child needs it. The Netflix show is an opportunity to highlight the role of friends and family when someone is struggling with depression, said Morris.

"What we encourage people to do is if they see someone struggling or especially if they're talking about suicide, it's absolutely imperative that we act."

Young people looking for support can call 1-800-SUICIDE or chat with someone at YouthinBC.com.

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Info Session: Wednesday, May 3, 11 am
VPL (Central Branch) | Level 3 Meeting room
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Renter union brims with 'tenant power'

HOUSING

Membership for rights group costs $1 to register

David P. Ball
Metro | Vancouver

"Tenant power" is their slogan; strength in numbers is their plan.

A week ahead of the May 9 provincial election — with advanced voting opening over the weekend and resuming Wednesday through Saturday — renters in Vancouver have banded together to fight for their rights.

And according to one organizer behind the Vancouver Tenants Union, which launched Saturday evening in Mount Pleasant, politicians of every stripe will be hearing from them.

"Our message is very clear: All political parties will have to deal with us," Lama Mugabo told Metro. "We don't care who wins, whoever wins will have to contend with us. We want to end this unfair treatment of renters."

That "unfair" treatment, Mugabo contended, includes growing numbers of "demovictions" — when tenants are evicted en masse, in order to demolish and redevelop their building — renters being priced out of housing, and B.C.'s "fixed-term lease loophole" that allows landlords to skirt the province's 3.7 per cent limit on annual rent increases.

Renters currently can appeal landlords' decisions to the Residential Tenancy Branch, short-term financial help is offered at the city-run Rent Bank, and there exist advocacy non-government organizations (NGOs) such as the Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre — the tenants' union is a much different approach.

More than 150 renters packed into the inaugural meeting of the Vancouver Tenants Union on Saturday at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Mount Pleasant neighbourhood. CONTRIBUTED

Membership costs $1 and comes with training on tenant rights and how to stand up for those rights collectively. The hope, Mugabo said, is to have at least one tenant representative in every city building — the aim being to better represent the roughly half of Vancouver's population who rent.

"We're not an NGO or a service provider," Mugabo explained. "When you are alone you are vulnerable, and you might not know your rights; so when landlords threaten them, they agree to what the landlord says.

"... We want people to know that this is a union for them; they'll be supported and given all the training they need to continue to advocate, protect each other, support their neighbours and be strong."

> **We want people to know that this is a union for them.**
> Lama Mugabo

Mugabo, 62, is no stranger himself to renting struggles, though he feels "fortunate" to now be in a B.C. Housing unit with controlled rents in Vancouver's West End.

"Several years ago, as a black person, I went through hell trying to find accommodation," he said. "I would call a landlord and they would say, 'Come down to look.

"But when I'd get there they'd say it was taken, but white friends would tell me, 'No it's still open.'"

Finally finding secure, stable housing for himself has inspired him to broaden those rights to as many other renters as possible, he said — whether in social or market housing, in the suburbs or the Downtown Eastside.

"We're not a homogeneous group," he explained. "People come from all kinds of classes and incomes."

The group's initial demands include stricter rent controls tied to each housing unit, so when a tenant moves out rents cannot rise significantly, as well as close the fixed-term tenancy loophole, and building 10,000 new affordable rental units a year.

For more information on the Vancouver Tenants Union or how to join, visit tenantsunion.ca.

IN BRIEF

Clark encounter goes viral

It's a piece of video footage that has inspired an anti-Liberal hashtag, as well as claims that the awkward interaction between Christy Clark and a voter named Linda was staged by the NDP. One woman approaches the B.C. Liberal leader, identifying herself as Linda and saying "I would never vote for you." The hashtag #IamLinda has quickly spread on social media among those who are not happy with Clark — many of whom appear to be NDP supporters. METRO

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Public 'screwed' by liquor reform

ALCOHOL

New B.C. pricing model has seen booze prices rise: NDP report

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Edmonton

Liquor prices in British Columbia have soared because of government reforms in 2015, despite Liberal promises to the contrary, according to a new report.

The province introduced a host of highly publicized liquor reforms two year ago, including a new wholesale pricing model for public and private liquor stores.

At the time, NDP MLA David Eby was accused of fear-mongering for saying the changes would impact the price of alcohol despite government's promise that they'd be unaffected by the new model.

Even in the months after the change, then-minister responsible, Suzanne Anton, downplayed an initial spike in some craft beer prices.

Spirits are sold at a private liquor store in Vancouver. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO FILE

"We're talking about cents here," Anton told Metro. But now, Eby says he has proof that he was right all along.

Eby commissioned a report from an industry consultant that tracked the price of 156 randomly selected products at BC Liquor Stores over the two years since the new pricing model was introduced. On average, the price of beer has increased 13.3 per cent, wine 11.6 per cent and spirits 10.7 per cent.

That coincided with a 10.2 per cent increase in government revenues from liquor sales the following year, and a further 1.8 per cent increase in the fiscal year ending in March 2017.

Eby says the increased revenues to government were more than double the increase in actual liquor sales (4.7 per cent) in that time and far exceeds inflation.

"The correlation is pretty strong to me," said Eby. "This is a hidden beer tax. They were being dishonest about it then. They did the same thing they've done with ICBC and BC Hydro rates."

When asked to explain the increase in prices, a spokesperson for the Liquor Distribution Branch said it would not offer a comment for Metro's story.

John Clerides, the owner of Davie Street's Marquis Wine Cellars, said the 2015 pricing model and other changes — such as liquor stores opening on Sundays — have impacted consumers' and small businesses' bottom lines.

"It's kicked us in the stomach," Clerides told Metro. "Our business went down 25 per cent, others went down 30 to 40 per cent. We've finally, finally built business back up but it's been without a doubt one of the hardest times in my 30 years in the business." Clerides said there haven't been any other outside market conditions to explain such a rise in costs.

"It's all been manufactured. The government has used us. From a consumer's point of view, they've been screwed," said the wine merchant.

13.3

The price of beer in B.C. has risen by 13.3 per cent over the two years since the new pricing model has been brought in.

Harjit Sajjan THE CANADIAN PRESS

Defence Minister offers full apology

Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan has formally apologized for embellishing his role in a key Afghan offensive even as evidence emerged that he had made the false claim before.

A beleaguered Sajjan took to social media this weekend to issue a full mea culpa for his claim to an overseas audience that he was the "architect" of Operation Medusa, a 2006 offensive by Canadian forces to oust Taliban fighters from districts around Kandahar.

Sajjan said he had "made a mistake" in describing his role. "I wish to retract that description and apologize for it. I am truly sorry," he said Saturday in a Twitter post that referred readers to a fuller explanation on his Facebook page.

"What I should have said is that our military successes are the result of the leadership, service and sacrifice of the many dedicated women and men in the Canadian Forces."

It was not, however, the first time Sajjan had made the claim. In 2015 he told the B.C. program Conversations That Matter that Gen. Jonathan Vance, the current chief of defence staff who was previously a commander in Afghanistan, saw him as a key figure in the 2006 offensive.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

After losing her Fort McMurray home at 40 weeks pregnant, Kyle McLaren and her fiancé are renting a home with their daughter Dawson, now almost one year old.

JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

New mother details her bittersweet return home

FORT MAC: ONE YEAR LATER

Baby brought family strength in dark time

Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

It was the best and worst year of her life. Last year, in their Abasand home, Kyle McLaren, who was 40 weeks pregnant, barely had time to scoop up her shoes before running out the door in the last minutes to evacuate from the Fort McMurray fire.

A year later, McLaren said she still dreams of what she could have taken with her — a photo album, an accordion file folder, her baby's blanket.

Her daughter, Dawson, who was born safely in Calgary on May 13 in Room 13 at 10:13 a.m., is walking now. McLaren says without her, she's not sure she would have made it through the fire.

"At first, none of it kicked in, we were just there," McLaren said. Instead of bringing her baby home to her own house, with the things she'd gathered for their newborn daughter, she was in a cramped room in her Calgary relatives' home.

"They let me just take a baby home from a hospital," McLaren said. "I still have postpartum, and I think it's worse because of what happened."

She said that when her mind lingers to having her next baby she immediately thinks: "What if the house burns down again?"

"Last year was the worst year of my life, but it was also the best, because she was born," McLaren said. "It was an exciting time and experience, but it was really crappy.… If I didn't have her, there was no way I would have made it through this.… She was a happy distraction."

Over the phone from Fort Mac, you can hear McLaren's teething tot gurgling in the background, fussing, laughing. Her home burnt down so she's living in a downtown condo. It took her eight months before she and her family felt ready to return.

"We were really excited to come up here, but it was scary," McLaren said.

When Dawson was six months old they came up to Fort Mac for a visit, snuck into their old neighbourhood and couldn't discern which of the rubble-ridden lots used to be theirs. That was hard, and she hasn't been able to go back since, but coming back for keeps was another matter.

"I was excited to be on our own again, be a family, but I was also terrified," McLaren said. "We drove up in separate cars, I wanted to pull over so many times and say, 'I can't do this, I'm going back.'"

She's still isn't sure how her daughter's birth story will form. Dawson is too young right now to realize the great escape her parents made to deliver her safely in Calgary.

"It's a life-changing thing," McLaren said. "I think it might be one of those things you tell at her wedding day."

Hearing about the fire now still upsets her. "Eventually, it won't be so hard to talk about."

metro EXCLUSIVE

Canadians are ready to 'stand up' and save the Great Lakes

May Warren
Metro | Toronto

The majority of Canadians want to see an increase in Great Lakes funding if the U.S. guts a $300 million conservation program.

A new Forum Research poll of 1,479 Canadians shows 57 per cent would back the initiative, with support particularly strong among Canadians under 34, the least wealthy, and those in Ontario and B.C.

It makes sense, said Elizabeth Hendriks, vice-president of Freshwater Program at World Wildlife Fund Canada, as younger people are the ones who will have to live with the consequences of not acting to protect fresh water resources.

"The impacts of climate change are today being felt through water and we need to be ready for that," she said.

"Canadians are demanding it."

Great Lakes funding faces significant obstacles in the U.S.

President Donald Trump's proposed budget would wipe out the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, cutting its $300 million budget by 97 per cent.

The program, which started under president George W. Bush, funds crucial activities like cleaning toxic areas and restoring natural habitats, said Nancy Goucher, manager of partnerships at Freshwater Future. She told Metro that Canada needs to put money towards domestic initiatives, like addressing algal blooms in Lake Erie that are already affecting water quality.

Canada does not have a program like the one in the U.S., and Great Lakes conservationists have long advocated for one.

Mark Mattson, president of Lake Ontario Waterkeepers, warns U.S. cuts would have disastrous consequences for the interconnected Great Lakes ecosystem, and hopes for political pushback.

"To make cutbacks now and to go from an era of restoration, which is really what we've been seeing for the last ten years, and go back to an era of destruction is just not going to fly with the Americans," he said.

"I think the poll proves it's not going to fly with Canadians either, and we're prepared to step up and take a leadership role."

Kayakers head out of the mouth of the Etobicoke Creek at Marie Curtis Park and onto Lake Ontario. METROLAND FILE

New York to woo Canadian tourists

New York's allure fell after Donald Trump unveiled anti-immigrant policies, says the city's official tourism organization. ISTOCK

TRAVEL

City's tourism industry seeks to offset the 'Trump slump'

New York's tourism industry is worried U.S. President Donald Trump's America First policies are turning off Canadian visitors, and they're heading north this week to woo Canucks and their tourism dollars.

The head of New York City's official tourism organization, NYC & Company, minces no words in admitting he's keen "to counter a little bit of the negative rhetoric that is coming out of Washington."

"We recognize there are challenges at the border at the moment," Fred Dixon said by phone from New York before the trip.

"We want to remind everyone that New York City is welcoming and that we are a diverse and safe city, a sanctuary city like Toronto, and we value the same things."

A supposed "Trump slump" has yet to be verified by hard data, but anecdotal evidence abounds of would-be travellers vowing to avoid the U.S.

Dixon said New York's allure plummeted after Trump unveiled a barrage of proposed anti-immigrant policies that included a ban on travel from certain Muslim-majority countries.

And then Trump started railing against Canada in recent weeks, with attacks targeting dairy farmers, softwood lumber subsidies and the North American Free Trade Agreement.

His organization predicts New York will see 300,000 fewer foreign tourists this year, representing a 2.1 per cent decline.

That includes a projected 17,000 fewer Canadians, a roughly 1.8 per cent drop.

While that may not seem like much, Dixon fears the numbers could fall further. His forecasters have detected a drop in online searches for NYC getaways. "It seems like this isn't going to be a passing situation. We could be in this environment for some time."

Whether Trump is actually keeping Canadians from heading south is hard to determine, said Allison Wallace, a spokeswoman for the Flight Centre Travel Group.

Anecdotally, she said the company has heard clients say they'll avoid travelling to the U.S. — but their numbers aren't showing it yet.

Wallace said its U.S. bookings are actually up from the same time last year.

Meanwhile, a Toronto-based bus tour company that gained international attention by blaming Trump for a slump in March now says business has picked up. Al Qanun, manager and part owner of Comfort Tour, said he now expects a "strong summer and fall." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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IDAHO

Locker-room assault sparks effort to heal

Bukky Ogunrinola's mother taught her years ago to use caution in how she dressed and presented herself in public. Being a young black woman in Idaho meant living in a world where she's sometimes greeted with suspicion.

Still, the 16-year-old was stunned to wake up one cold January morning to see the windows of her family's SUV smashed and the words "go back" in white paint splashed across the vehicle.

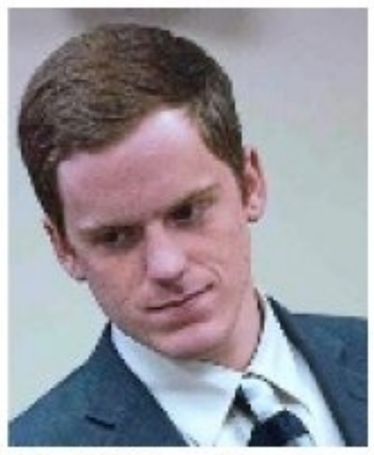
"I'm a woman of colour, and I'm an athlete in Idaho. That's not that easy. I mean, I think there's three of us in Idaho?" said Ogunrinola, whose family emigrated from Nigeria 14 years ago.

Community leaders in Idaho are collecting stories of violence and discrimination like Ogunrinola's in the wake of a sexual assault of a disabled black athlete by his white teammates that shocked not only a small town but residents across the state. They hope to identify possible policy changes or improvements to community outreach.

The effort is being launched in a state better known for its potatoes than its diversity, but that isn't stopping advocates from working to identify solutions to limit acts of hate.

According to Idaho State Police statistics, hate crimes in the state have gradually declined since 2011, with 22 hate crime incidents being reported in 2015. But nearly half were against a person of colour. Current census data shows Idaho's population is 89 per cent white and just 0.6 per cent black. Another 5.1 per cent identifies as other.

The effort began after John R.K. Howard and two teammates were charged with sodomizing a black teenage boy with a clothes hanger in 2015 in the locker room of the high school in the tiny farming town of Dietrich, known for its deeply religious population. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



John R.K. Howard
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

NORTH KOREA

Missiles will 'get better'

U.S. President Donald Trump said after North Korea's latest failed rocket launch that communist leader Kim Jong-Un will eventually develop better missiles, and "we can't allow it to happen."

In a interview Sunday on CBS' Face the Nation, the president would not discuss the possibility of military action, saying: "It is a chess game. I just don't want people to know what my thinking is."

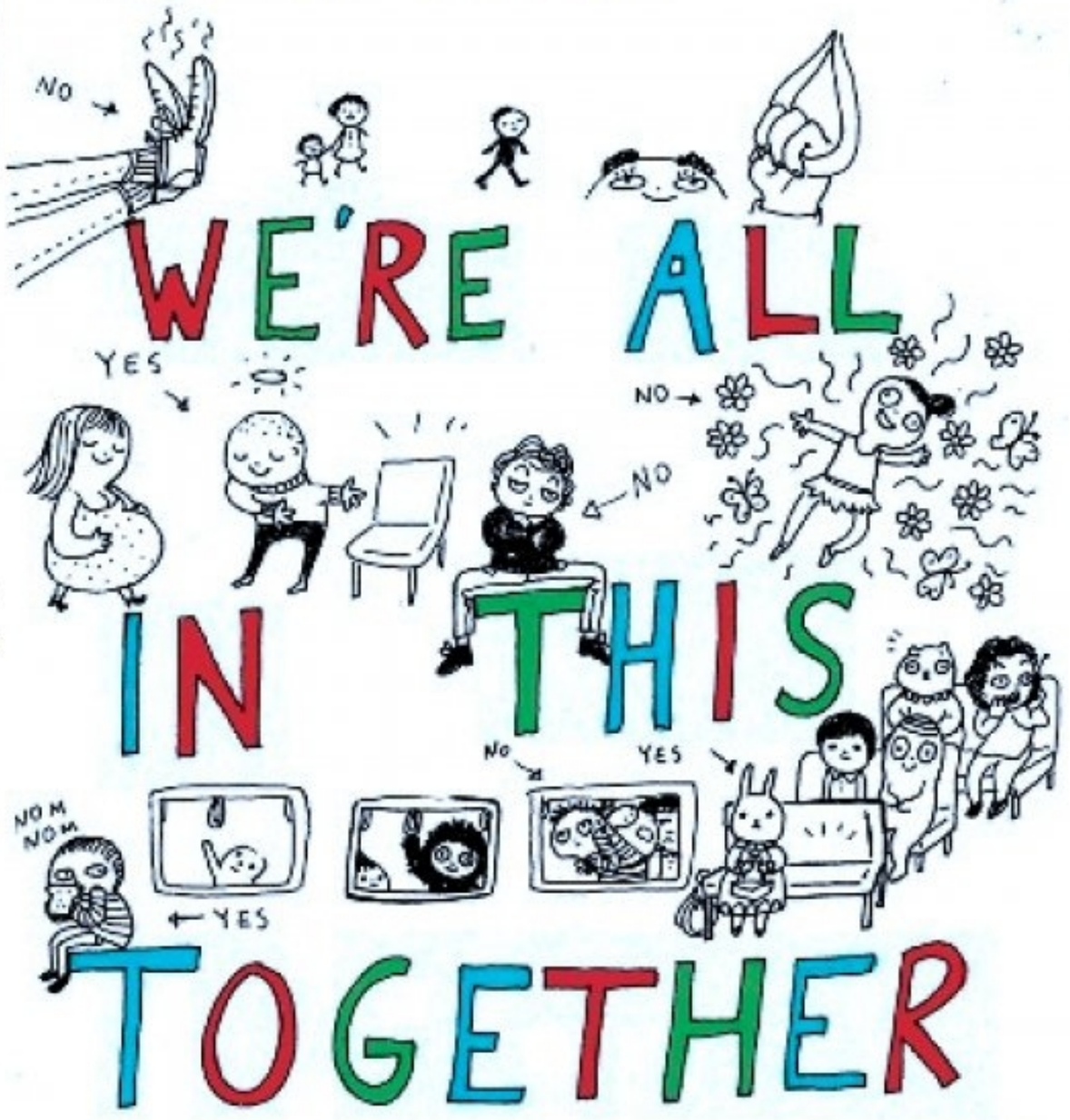
On Saturday, a North Korean mid-range ballistic missile broke up a few minutes after launch, the third test-fire flop this month. The program's repeated failures over the past few years have given rise to suspicions of U.S. sabotage.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Monday, May 1, 2017

URBAN ETIQUETTE ELLEN VANSTONE

The top ten transit faux pas and how to avoid them



Judging by the mailbag here at Metro, our nation's public transit systems are filled with people who don't have the first clue about proper etiquette. It's almost as if they don't care about the comfort and safety of their fellow riders! Here is a handy Top Ten list of reminders for readers who do care.

1. Think of your backpack as a precious baby, that you want to hug to your chest and protect from the bumps and bruises of fellow riders. Do not think of this baby as a small lumpy weapon strapped to your back in order to whack surrounding passengers.

2. Keep your feet off the furniture. Those big boots of yours might impress some, but most of us will only be reminded of animals, like the ones you grew up with in a barn, and the dogs and pigeons whose sidewalk-poop particles you are now distributing onto seats shared by all.

3. Keep your business to your self. We're not impressed that you own a cellphone, and we don't want your loud conversation ringing in our ears while we try to mind our own business.

4. One ticket = one seat. Don't take up two seats with your bags and belongings. Don't take up 1½ seats with your elbows or sad addiction to manspreading.

5. Stand up and offer your seat when you see a parent struggling with small children, or a pre-parent struggling with a giant, unwieldy belly, or an older, infirm person, or any other kind of incapacitated fellow human being who needs that seat more than you do.

6. Stand aside if you're near the doors and not getting off. Don't block the exit doors.

7. Sit down rather than hover over an empty seat, preventing anyone else from using it.

8. Nibble discreetly on some inert comestible if you must. Please refrain from chowing down on a dripping, reeking burrito, half of which ends up on your clothes or the floor. It's hard to watch let alone smell.

9. Wash irritating chemicals off your body when going in public. Though your "eau de Pepé Le Pew" may smell marginally better than the warm, pungent sushi being scarfed down in the seat next to you, nobody really wants your artificial fragrance up their nostrils and bringing tears to their eyes. And if this appeal to consideration doesn't convince you, note that perfume, like plastic, is increasingly passé.

10. Move to the back. This is a strange one and we've all done it — we cluster near the front like mad drunks at a kitchen party, happy to be crushed in a crowd rather than retire to the thinly populated regions of the living room, or back of the bus. It's a human impulse But as overpowering human impulses go, this is one of the easier ones to master. So disengage from the crowd, be the rugged individualist we know you can be, and lead the masses to space salvation at the rear!

It's these small acts of heroism that may save us all in the end.

Need advice?
Email Ellen:
askellen@metronews.ca

VICKY MOCHAMA

Revived rift is ruining my ability to wax nostalgic

Like fanny packs, crop tops and Jeff Goldblum's career, trade conflagrations over softwood lumber with our American neighbours are back.

It's the '90s all over again.

Softwood lumber is in the news now thanks to Donald Trump, who last week slapped duties between three and 24 per cent on Canadian softwood lumber. Industry leaders here shot back, saying the move was illegal and they will fight it in court.

Growing up, my parents were nightly news watchers; it seemed to me that Peter Mansbridge was positively obsessed with softwood lumber. (We should not rule out the possibility that this trade debacle is actually Peter's parting present to his fellow newscasters. A true diva only leaves after an encore.) Back then, I did not understand what it was about but I, along with the rest of the nation, breathed a sigh of relief when Canada and the United States announced a resolution to the long-standing dispute in 2006.

The softwood lumber squabble was, I had hoped, something I could tell the next generations about with sighing nostalgia.

"In the '90s and early aughts," I planned to tell my grandnieces and nephews via telepathic Skype, "we used to have trees."

"Mom took us to see The Last Tree at Disney!" they'd exclaim.

I would sigh, "Yes, and once upon a time, we made things with trees and we got into a fight with the United States about trees. We called it the softwood lumber dispute."

With the deadpan boredom of children, they'd ask, "What's softwood lumber?"

"Hello? Sorry. My telepathy is going out."

My telepathy will not be going out. I don't think I can answer that question. And I had hoped that it wouldn't come up again during my adult years.

You see, I'm not entirely sure I know what softwood lumber is. I am certain I've been told about it.

It's one of those quirks of the brain that there are a handful of important things that I'll always have difficulty remembering.

For example, I regularly pay a utility bill but I can't tell you with any certainty whether it's heat, water, electricity or gas. It is possibly two of the four though I'd be guessing if I had to pick.

Another one I can't quite pin down is ovulation. I'm a woman and a feminist and I believe in taking responsibility for one's own health. And yet, I have nothing but a series of guesses as to all five Ws and the How of ovulation. That one I'm certain I've been tested on.

How odd then to find myself sympathizing with President Trump. Both of us know nothing about softwood lumber, have likely been briefed on it and are fudging the answer.

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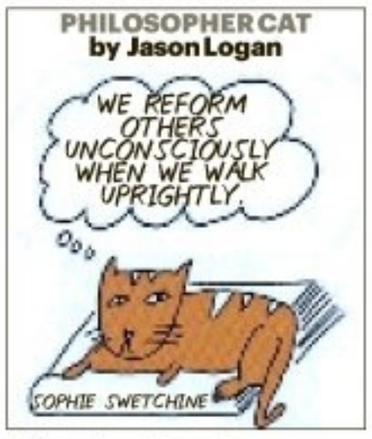

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metro LIFE

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Hope for preemies as artificial womb helps tiny lambs grow

Don't end up paying the tax man too much

TAX

It's better to have money in your pocket now than later

Gail Vaz-Oxlade
For Metro Canada

Tax refunds sound and feel great for most of us at the end of a financial year, but wouldn't you rather have that money in the first place? ISTOCK

People are always telling me why they can't save. In the next breath they tell me about the tax refund they're getting.

I ask: "Why would you give the government an interest-free loan? Are you cray-zee?"

They say: "It's like forced savings."

So what they're really saying is that they can't keep their sticky paws off their savings and would rather earn no interest on their money. Hmm.

Reality check: Money in your pocket now is better than money in your pocket down the road.

And yet every year, about two-thirds of the people who file a tax return in Canada end up getting a refund, with the average refund running to just over $1,400.

Geeze Louise! That's more than $100 a month you could have put to work for YOU.

Start by reviewing your TD1 Form to make sure you have only as much tax as necessary withheld. If you just got married and your mate doesn't have an income, you can update your TD1 to claim the spousal amount. Ditto if you're new to the workforce and plan to claim tuition credits you've carried forward.

Here's a form that very few people use, but is remarkably useful for keeping money out of the government's hands: Form T1213: Request to Reduce Tax Deductions at Source. This form lets you request permission from the tax man to have your employer reduce the amount of income tax taken off of your paycheque every month.

If you can demonstrate that you're eligible for certain recurring deductions that will reduce your tax bill at the end of the year, you can trade in your tax refund for more take-home pay.

Do you make monthly RRSP contributions by way of pre-authorized withdrawal? You're eligible. How about childcare expenses? If you're tithing monthly, you can do it for your charitable donations. If you have rental losses, interest expenses on investment loans, or carrying charges, those are eligible too. So are support payments.

You'll have to fill out the form and send it to the tax man every year. You can do it at any time, but the best time is in October or November for the following year, so open up your diary and set a reminder right now.

Once you're approved, the tax man will provide instructions by letter to you, which you then give to your employer, who will adjust your pay for the remainder of the year.

Fill out Form T1213 and get the tax man's approval and instead of paying extra tax and getting refunded, you'll pay less tax on an ongoing basis so you'll have more cash that you can then use to establish an automatic savings plan.

Whether you send that money to your RRSP, your TFSA or your high-interest savings account, it's way better in your hands than in the tax man's.

For more money advice, visit Gail's website at gailvazoxlade.com

JOHANNA SCHNELLER
WHAT I'M WATCHING

As a group, humans are corruptible

THE SHOW: The Handmaid's Tale S1, E2 (Bravo)
THE MOMENT: The cookie

In a dystopian near-future, handmaid Offred (Elisabeth Moss) serves as a breeder for her Commander (Joseph Fiennes) and his wife Serena (Yvonne Strahovski). At another commander's house, a condescending wife offers Offred a cookie.

"You shouldn't spoil them. Sugar is bad for them," another wife scolds.

"Surely one won't hurt," Condescending says.

Serena hands Offred a perfect macaron. It's clear this is a rare treat. It's also horribly shaming. Offred takes a small bite.

"Isn't she well-behaved!" Condescending trills.

Offred, excused, clamps a hand over her mouth and ducks into a powder room. She spits the lump of chewed cookie into the sink and rinses it away. She smiles into the mirror. They haven't killed her spirit yet.

I was anxious about this series. I greatly admired Margaret Atwood's source novel, but there were things I didn't buy (the biggest: that a society set up by men would revolve around dreadful sex). But I'm happy to report that the three episodes I've seen are terrific.

First, as all reviewers have noted, creeping totalitarianism in the real world makes the story eerily timely. Second, the flashbacks that show the U.S. turning into this rigid theocracy are excellent slices of believability. Third, we see just enough of them that the scenes of pre-turn, regular life look like heavens of freedom.

Mainly, I'm loving how the show makes room for scenes like this one; original, off-kilter, yet tone-perfect character moments that demonstrate the larger theme: humans as a group are corruptible, but individual humanity can endure.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

Elisabeth Moss as Offred in The Handmaid's Tale. CONTRIBUTED

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Farm's water buffalo are the big cheese

DAIRY

Consumer demand for versatile milk is growing

Owen Roberts
Urban Cowboy

Nothing says spring like the birth of a baby animal — even if that baby is a 100-pound water buffalo, named Jolene.

Jolene was born last month at the Ontario Water Buffalo Company, about two hours east of Toronto. Owners Martin Littkemann and Lori Smith are expecting about 100 calves this spring.

Females like Jolene are particularly coveted for their milk. In four years, when she's a full-grown five-foot-tall, 2,000 pound adult, she'll be producing up to 10 litres of milk per day.

And that's music to Littkemann and Smith's ears.

Buffalo milk is a lucrative, sought-after, versatile product. It's protein rich, high in fat and low in cholesterol. This spring, Littkemann and Smith are working with commercial dairies in Toronto and elsewhere to produce new water buffalo products, including gelato and a blue cheese called Azzurro di Bufala.

Restauranteurs are catching on. Clark Day, newly minted fellow of the Ontario Hostelry Institute and owner of Bayview Farm Restaurant in Kingston, Ont., says Littkemann and Smith make some of the best cheese in the province. In his fine dining establishment, he offers the Ontario Water Buffalo Company's mozzarella — the crowning jewel of a tasty Caprese salad — along with its asiago, blue and ricotta cheese.

"Martin and Lori and talented and incredibly hard working farmers" he says, "and we are honoured to represent them at our restaurant. Their products help keep our menu varied and original."

Lori Smith gives some love to newborn calf, Jolene. PHOTOS BY LIZ BEDDALL/FOR METRO CANADA

THE FUTURE *of* FARMING

What's next for these water buffalo farmers?
Researchers at the University of Guelph and McGill University are helping the Ontario Water Buffalo Company improve the genetics of their herd. That involves modern reproductive technology, such as embryo transfer, in-vitro fertilization and artificial insemination. By the fall, the farm hopes to be exporting breeding animals.
OWEN ROBERTS/FOR METRO

Helping feed the hungry world
It's estimated that by 2050, the world will be consuming two-thirds more protein than it does today. Some experts believe indigenous animal such as water buffalo could help. "Buffalo production makes an important contribution to economic development, rural livelihood, poverty alleviation, and meets the fast-growing demand for animal protein," write B.M. Naveena and M. Kiran in the journal Animal Frontiers.
OWEN ROBERTS/FOR METRO

Herd assistant Erin Joron, left, and herd manager Caitlin West work in the milk barn.

one of the largest and most well-established of the dozen water buffalo farms in Canada.

Yet despite its size, Littkemann, Smith and their herdspeople know each animal by name.

Jolene, for example, is joining the likes of Zorra, Jamaica and Sunnie, other names found in the herd.

The water buffalo have oodles of room to roam and graze here — 450 acres, in fact. They can swim in an eight-foot-deep pond. They can wallow in whatever mud they can find.

Or they can chill.

Despite their size, water buffalo are gentle, docile animals, content to do very little. Yvette, the farm mascot, even lets people sit on her back for photos, each year during the Water Buffalo Food Festival in nearby Stirling.

And even though they are easily milked — like they are twice a day at the Ontario Water Buffalo Company, at 6 a.m. and 5 p.m. — they've never really caught on in Canada. Here, more productive breeds of dairy cows, especially Holsteins, are favoured, which give about three times as much milk per day.

But that's fine with farmers Littkemann and Smith, who have experience with conventional dairy and beef cattle. When they decided to commit to water buffalo, they weren't looking for the norm.

"We tend to take the road less travelled," says Littkemann. "We like doing something different, and in Canada, it's hard to find something more different to farm than water buffalo."

Owen Roberts is an agricultural journalist at the University of Guelph. Follow him on Twitter at @TheUrbanCowboy.

FARM *links*

Connecting with the world of water buffalo

- **Ideas for using buffalo mozzarella**
  pinterest.com/explore/buffalo-mozzarella
- **All about water buffalo**
  nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/w/water-buffalo
- **Water Buffalo Festival**
  ontariowaterbuffalo.ca/events.html
- **Take our poll** The name of Martin and Lori's next water buffalo calf will start with an "L." Take our **metronews.ca** poll and tell us what the calf's name should be?

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CAMP GUIDE

PREPPING YOUR NEWBIE DAY CAMPER

ISTOCK

Tips to get kids ready for their first day camp

Your daughter is about to embark a fun-filled journey with new friends and exciting adventures. The only problem? She doesn't know it yet.

Here are a few tips to help parents ease any pre-camp jitters and make the most of what will surely be the best of times.

It begins even before the camp is selected.

"One great tip that we often recommend is to choose camps with your kids," says Agnes Stawicki, managing editor at Our Kids Media. "When they're involved in it from the start they can take ownership of that decision."

Then when it comes to getting ready for camp that first morning, she says that involvement should translate into eagerness.

The next step is getting into reminder mode.

"Let them know ahead of time – say the week before – what is happening next week," says Stawicki. "You can share with them little tidbits on what is going to be happening at camp or the types of activities that they might be getting involved in. And that will again get them excited about going."

That first hurdle, she says, may be the only one that needs clearing. "Once they get there on the first day, they're typically so excited they can't wait to go back (the following day), and by the end of the week they're saying, 'No, it's already done? I want to stay longer.'"

Staying on top of the actual requirements of the camp can also reduce anxiety.

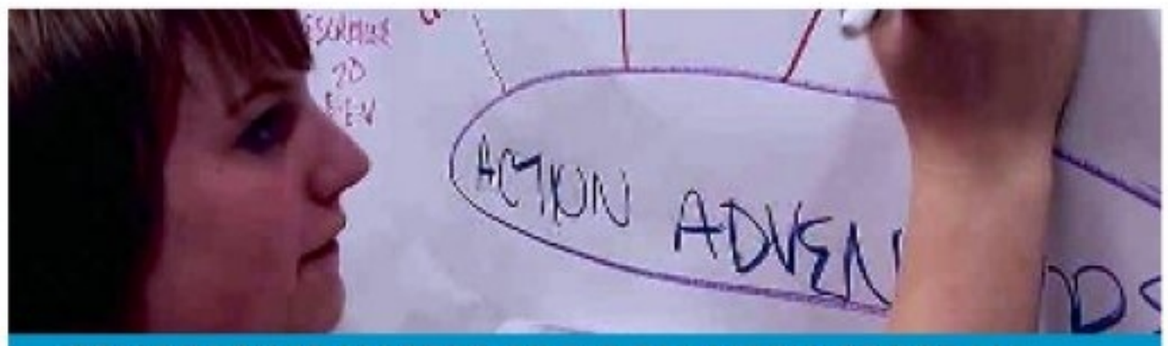
"ONCE THEY GET THERE ON THE FIRST DAY, THEY'RE TYPICALLY SO EXCITED THEY CAN'T WAIT TO GO BACK (THE FOLLOWING DAY)"

– Agnes Stawicki, managing editor at Our Kids Media

"Make sure that you have a good look at a checklist of what to bring and what not to bring," she says. "Particularly regarding food allergies, so that your child doesn't feel that they are singled out for bringing something that's not allowed."

Stawicki says homesickness is less prevalent than at sleep-away camps, partly because kids have reached school age and are accustomed to being away from home throughout the day. "That said, speak to the camp if you feel that your child may be homesick and find out what their policies are around that," she says. "Most camps are very open with communication. Just to let you know how your child is doing, as well."

–SEAN DEASY



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metro SPORTS

"I just want to fight everyone, man": Londoner Anthony Joshua who stopped Wladimir Klitschko in the 11th Round on home soil at Wembley Stadium

No room for error vs. LBJ

OPINION

Bruce Arthur

James Jones has played with LeBron James for a long time, or at least it feels like it. He has been in every one of the six consecutive NBA Finals James has reached; like LeBron, he has three championship rings. He's seen a lot.

"You see a little bit of Bird in him, you see some Magic, you see some Oscar," said Jones last year, as LeBron was beginning to dismantle the Toronto Raptors in the conference final. "A lot of Big O. He'll tell you he sees a lot of Big O in himself."

That's Larry Bird, Magic Johnson, and Oscar Robertson; Raptors executive Wayne Embry, who played against luminaries like Wilt Chamberlain and Bill Russell, considers the Big O the greatest player he has ever seen. LeBron was always compared to Michael Jordan because Jordan is considered the modern apex of the game, but stylistically he has always been an evolutionary version of a different tree. Raptors forward Patrick Patterson says you try to be physical, to keep him out of the lane, to make him shoot, to limit his passing. But.

"Yeah, definitely go in with those points, but at the same time, he is LeBron James," says Patterson, the day before Game 1 in Cleveland. "Hands-down the best player in the world right now."

Starting Monday, the Raptors get to face the game's apex predator again. Last year it looked closer on paper than it did in real life: in a six-game series, the Raptors were outscored by an average of 15.5 points per game, which is a lot when you won two of those games. LeBron hasn't lost an Eastern Conference playoff series since 2009, the year DeMar DeRozan was drafted.

But now, Cleveland is a lesser thing.

LeBron James and the Cavaliers won three of four games against DeMar DeRozan and the Raptors during the regular season. RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

> **He's who we have to go through to get to the next round.**
> Patrick Patterson

In the second half of the season they went 21-20. After the all-star break the only team whose defence was worse was the sitcom-esque Los Angeles Lakers.

Cleveland has gone 14-15 against playoff teams since beating Golden State on Christmas Day, and in the first round LeBron averaged 32.8 points on .543 shooting, .450 from three-point range, plus 9.8 rebounds, 9.0 assists, 3.0 steals and 2.0 blocks, and the Cavaliers swept an utterly average Indiana team by an average of four points per game.

So LeBron played monster basketball and Cleveland could, and maybe should, have lost a couple of those games. And the Raptors still won't say this is a team that can be had. Why?

"They're going to try to outscore you more than anything else," says coach Dwane Casey, "but they're still very capable defensively. Just because of James and the way he reads the floor and reads situations, helps his teammates."

This is the biggest test in franchise history. The Raptors enter this series with a split personality — capable of greatness, capable of absurd failures. If they are going to be anything more than a footnote on the great man's path, then they will need to become bigger than they seem. They will need to play fearless basketball, smart basketball, without much margin for error.

This is LeBron, a walking legend, the monster. This time there is a soft underbelly, waiting to be exposed. It's there. And because it's LeBron James, that still might not be enough.

15.5

Cleveland outscored Toronto by an average of 15.5 points per game in last year's six-game conference final.

Bruce Arthur is a sports columnist with the Toronto Star

OBITUARY

Lions legend's wife dies

Tracy Lasorsa-Simon, the wife of B.C. Lions director of Canadian scouting Geroy Simon, has died, the team announced on Sunday.

The cause of death wasn't released.

"We are devastated at the news of Tracy's passing and we ask that you keep the entire Simon family in your thoughts and prayers during this incredibly difficult time," said vice-president of football operations, general manager and head coach Wally Buono in a statement. "Tracy has been part of the B.C. Lions family for more than a decade and her loss is heart breaking for all of us."

Lasorsa-Simon leaves behind Simon and two children.

Simon is in his third season as a member of the Lions' football operations staff. He spent 12 seasons as a player in B.C. and set franchise marks for receptions, yards and touchdowns.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Geroy Simon THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

NBA PLAYOFFS

Thomas rallies Celts from early deficit

Isaiah Thomas had 33 points and nine assists, and the Celtics made 19 three-pointers to beat the Washington Wizards 123-111 Sunday in Boston and take a 1-0 lead in their Eastern Conference semifinal matchup.

Thomas played just a day after attending the funeral for his sister, who died in a car accident earlier this month outside of Tacoma, Wash.

The Wizards scored the game's first 16 points, but the Celtics rallied in the second quarter with Thomas briefly sidelined after getting one of his two front teeth knocked out.

Isaiah Thomas GETTY IMAGES

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Tottenham finally escapes from Arsenal's grip

Tottenham shifted the balance of power in north London's soccer rivalry by securing its first Premier League finish above Arsenal in 22 years with a 2-0 victory over its neighbour on Sunday.

Arsenal imploded inside 77 seconds at the start of the second half to hand Tottenham a ninth consecutive league win. Dele Alli scrambled the ball into the net and Harry Kane won a soft penalty that he converted. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rendon pads his stats in Nats' thrashing of Mets

Anthony Rendon had 10 RBIs, three home runs and six hits as the Washington Nationals took advantage of Noah Syndergaard's injury and mauled the New York Mets 23-5 on Sunday to set a franchise scoring record.

Rendon went a career-best 6-for-6 and scored five times while setting a club mark for RBIs. He became the 13th player in major-league history to drive in 10 or more runs in a game.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL PLAYOFFS

Ducks rebound to make it a series

The Anaheim Ducks wrested some momentum back in their playoff series against the Edmonton Oilers with a 6-3 win Sunday.

Edmonton still leads the best-of-seven Western Conference semifinal series 2-1.

Jakob Silfverberg scored twice for Anaheim although his second of the game will irritate Oilers fans until Wednesday's Game 4.

Edmonton challenged it for being offside, but the goal was allowed to stand.

Ducks captain Ryan Getzlaf had a goal and an assist with Anaheim also getting goals from Rickard Rakell, Chris Wagner and Ryan Kesler.

Connor McDavid, Patrick Maroon and Anton Slepychev scored for the Oilers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

GAME 3 In Edmonton

6	3
DUCKS	OILERS

MAKE IT TODAY

Healthy Peanut Butter and Jelly Smoothie

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Try this healthy morning drink that harkens back to a childhood favourite: the pb&j. If allergies are an issue, feel free to swap almond, cashew or sunflower butter for peanut butter.

Ready in: 5 minutes
Prep Time: 5 minutes
Serves: 2

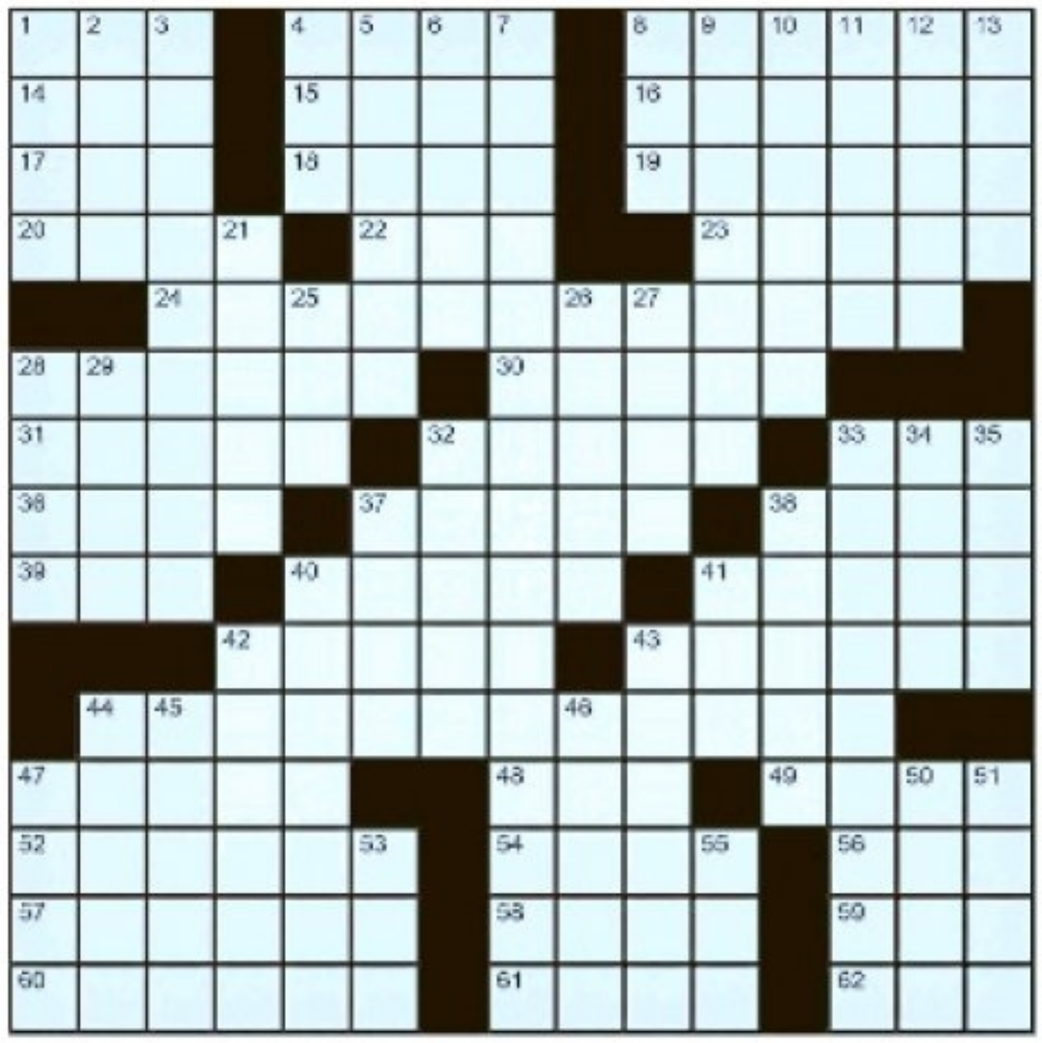
Ingredients
- 1/4 cup frozen blueberries
- 1/4 cup frozen blackberries
- 1/4 cup frozen raspberries
- 1/3 cup Greek yogurt
- 1 heaping Tbsp peanut butter
- 3/4 cup almond milk
- 1 date

Directions
1. Place the date at the bottom of your blender and then all of the other ingredients. Whiz until you get a smooth consistency.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Opera singing style, _ canto
4. Stuff emptied from beach shoes
8. Skyping need
14. 108-card game
15. 'Very', hip-style
16. Put on a frock as a court professional
17. VJ's network
18. Attraction
19. Word origin
20. Li'l favoured choice
22. _-Aztecan languages
23. Viking manoeuvers
24. Traditional folk performance around a streamers-decorated post: 2 wds.
28. Reduced salary
30. _, Michigan
31. E! reality series, for short
32. Bracelet location
33. P-to-T link
36. Pate de foie _
37. Red veggies
38. Subatomic particle
39. Enunciate
40. Wedding gown wearer
41. English dramatist, George _ (Contemporary of William Shakespeare)
42. Do something beneath one's dignity
43. Farm formation for foals
44. 'As Long As Your Eyes Are Wide' is this Vancouver band's new album: 3 wds.
47. Sharp weapons
48. Roman myth household deity
49. Fleece
52. "Welcome to our home.": 2 wds.
54. Trim
56. "Bambi" (1942) character
57. Exceed
58. "Step _ _ pets." (Furry friends palindrome)
59. Time off letters
60. More succinct
61. Turndowns in the Highlands
62. "Move Your Body" singer

DOWN
1. Knocked noggin result
2. Doorway, e.g.
3. 'It's a new road' in this Psychedelic Furs tune: 3 wds.
4. South: French
5. Like a sudden ending
6. "Fab!"
7. Physician who was Montreal's mayor from 1854 to 1856: abbr. + first name + last name
8. Small
9. Competitor
10. Women's fashion chain, Lane _
11. Comedian
12. Home
13. YMCA part
21. Actualities
25. Sound of laughter
26. Upper crust
27. Univ. treatise
28. Puny parcels
29. Glowing light
32. Consider the options
33. Denizens of Longueuil's province
34. Tire-moving maneuver
35. Snick-or-_
37. The _ Awards (Music honours across the pond)
38. Restaurant offerings
40. Place to place a night table
41. Org. in Jeannie C. Riley's 1968 hit
42. Scuba professionals
43. One might have icons and candles
44. Pushily push
45. Archer, when pointing
46. 1979: "I _ Be Your Lover" by Prince
47. Aberdeen's country, briefly
50. Years, in old Rome
51. Rooney of "The Social Network" (2010)
53. Lofoten's li'l land
55. Blood type designation, for short

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
If you can play hooky today or cocoon at home, you'll be happy to do so. Somehow, you don't feel ready to greet the world this Monday morning. (Sigh.)

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Today you will use your emotions to make important decisions. However, be careful, because hunches are not always right. Use caution to prevent accidents today.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Be mindful of your money and your possessions today, because something out of the blue might cause you to lose money or break something you own. Be careful.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You feel restless and rebellious today. You might be obsessed with an idea or something unusual or different. Guard against accidents. Slow down.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Today is a tough Monday. Things are unpredictable, and it's hard to stay focused. Just do your best to keep treading water. (That's all you can do.)

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
A friend might surprise you today. Alternatively, you might meet a real character — someone who is different or unusual. Either way, this is not a boring day!

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You might be high-viz for some unexpected reason, especially when dealing with parents, bosses and VIPs. (Incidentally, this includes the police.) Be aware.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Travel plans and schedules for postsecondary schools are subject to unexpected changes and delays today. You can count on this. Allow extra time so that you have wiggle room to cope.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Stay on top of matters related to inheritances, taxes, debt and shared property so that you are not caught off guard today. Something unexpected will affect these areas.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Conversations with your partner or a close friend will be touchy today, because people are rebellious and independent. This person doesn't want to cooperate.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Your work routine will be interrupted with equipment breakdowns, computer crashes, staff shortages and canceled meetings today.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
This is an accident-prone day for your children so be extra vigilant. Likewise, social plans might suddenly change. Oops! This also is a rocky day for romance.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

	3		8		2			
		9				1		5
	4			6			9	
1								8
		3		8		7		
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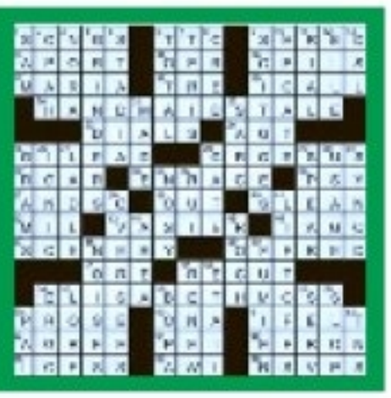
FRIDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

for more fun and games go to metronews.ca/games

1	8	2	6	3	4	9	7	5
4	7	9	2	8	5	3	1	6
3	6	5	9	7	1	2	4	8
5	4	7	1	9	3	6	8	2
9	3	6	7	2	8	1	5	4
2	1	8	5	4	6	7	3	9
8	2	3	4	1	9	5	6	7
6	9	4	3	5	7	8	2	1
7	5	1	8	6	2	4	9	3



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